

everything, that is for the young into an entertainment, thinking that they can in that way get them interested in the work of the Lord. Such a mistake is very dangerous to the church work, and has wrought havoc in many a life that might otherwise have been consecrated to the Lord. I have known those who would work day and night to get up a literary in the interest of the church, but seldom ever got out to prayer-meeting; the heart was good but the judgment is bad, they have not learned of the Lord the way of truth. While we should by all means develop the intellectual and literary life, we should not forget that it is the devotional element that marks the Christian zeal, and that prayer is as essential to the soul, as is bread to the body. A compromise with worldliness is never a means of grace. There are many different types of men in the world, but when the soul is seeking God, all men have about the same drift of feelings, and when we have found him whom my soul loveth, then that undefinable inward joy, finds expression in all men in the same way, songs of thanksgiving, and prayer. Hence as we drift Godward we run largely into the same type, i. e., devotional faith, and the characteristic humility, that was in Jesus, and that made him the one perfect man. So that the devotional feelings should always predominate in active Christian work, and when they are heart felt they will express themselves in much the same types of song, so this accounts for the reason many of the old songs are never worn out. So Brethren, do not neglect to sing the old songs often, and sing them loud; let the heart pour out its joy, as well as its sorrow, to God. I really think that there is not nearly enough singing in our general worship, and too many long prayers, and not enough short prayers. Young faith demands many changes of scene, a varied program, a quick succession of song and prayer. Do not sing songs that are beyond the reach of the common people, and remember that the vast majority are common people. And do not ask young people to sing as if they were at a funeral for young life is not ready to die, and they do not like funeral dirges. In fact Christianity is not dying, it is living. So then we conclude that the place for the young convert in the church, is in the most active part of it. Young feet run swift, young hands work fast. Let them.

—Washing D. C., is becoming a "city of churches." There are at present more than 200 places of worship within the city limits. Of this number fifty-two belong to the various branches of Methodism, forty-five to the Baptists, and twenty-one to the Presbyterians.

MISFIT METHODS.

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I write of methods of church work. More particularly of those modes of church work that are shaped by the strong hand of the pastor. There must be method if there is work. The man without a plan is a man who purposes nothing.

The question of method is a vital one. It touches a nerve center in the life of the church. More directly, and more painfully often, it touches a nerve center in the heart of the pastor who knows what he wishes to accomplish but does not know how to bring it about. He knows we have got past tolerating the absurd notion that if the intention is good it makes little or no difference what method is used. We give great credit to the man of right spirit. But the spirit is not enough. With the right intention and the right spirit it is necessary that the right way should be found.

Set this down: God is not bound to give success to unreasonable plans of our own devising, even though our purpose is of the most pious kind, and though we pray never so earnestly. There are those who seem to think that it shows more faith to try to do Christian work in ways not commended by ordinary good sense; as when, for example, one undertakes to convert another by reading to him a passage of Scripture that he cannot understand. We need but to glance at the manner in which our Lord lays out the work for his people to see that faith is shown not by unreasonable efforts, but by an obedient adjustment of means to ends.

How does our Lord formulate his work? He does it by the use of certain simple and striking similes. He says it is like fishing, like seed-sewing, like building, like warrings. Just look at these figures. Are they not all alike in this, that they insist upon a reasonable connection between the effort and the object? Why should he liken the winning of men to fishing unless he intended to indicate that the fisherman's skill is to be employed? Why should he liken the lodging of truth in the hearts of men to the sewing of seed unless he intended to convey the thought that there is in such work the same necessity for selecting seed and prepared soil and timeliness of labor as in the planting of grain? Why should he liken the structuring of souls to the building of a temple, unless there is in both a fundamental stage and a superstructural stage logically related to each other? Why should he liken the aggressions and resistances of Christianity to the arts of war, unless analogous arts are to be employed by the promulgator and defender of Christian

truth? There must be method if we are to be true to the inspired analogies. All that studious forethought, mental alertness and instant readiness can do to make and master opportunity, must be done.

This is seen. The age is fertile in plans designed to bring the institutions of Christianity into practical adjustment to the new conditions that arise. It is a pleasant thing to observe the ingenuity displayed by Christian ministers in devising new ways for winning attention to the Gospel, for dealing with quickened consciences, for coping with financial difficulties, for developing talent in the church, for multiplying missions. And many of these are as successful as they are ingenious—some of them successful beyond all sanguine expectation. While at times there is occasion for the dubious shaking of the head over methods that are in some respects plainly at variance with the spirit and purpose of the Gospel, these are exceptions. For the most part the devices referred to are as unobjectionable in character as they are original and bold.

But now another question springs upon us, namely, as to the transference of one man's plan to another man's field. This question intrudes because it has been found in instances not a few that the method that has been reported a flat failure in another. Mr. Blank of Philadelphia has a Saturday afternoon meeting for boys and girls. It is largely attended, the interest is intense, conversions are numerous, the effects of it are plainly visible in all that section of the city. Mr. Dash of Fairville learns of it, corresponds with Mr. Blank, gets his whole method, and opens Saturday afternoon meeting for boys and girls. But few children come, those who do come are inattentive and inclined to romp, some casual visitors give out the opinion that more harm than good is being done, and it is given up. Mr. Man of Brooklyn reports great success in helping a praise service a half hour before the Sunday evening sermon. He says the people come out as never before, everybody enters into the spirit of praise, the congregation is brought into an excellent state of preparation for the discourse, and great good results. Mr. Otherman of Kingsport determines to do the same; but a few weeks' trial, in which he succeeds in having a half-hearted, second-rate singing school, that exhausts the people and dissipates the little spiritual energy they have is followed by the abrupt termination of that arrangement. To these two might be added a score of similar instances as to an inquiry meeting after each Sunday school session, a Sunday evening orchestra conversation clubs, penny-a-day